

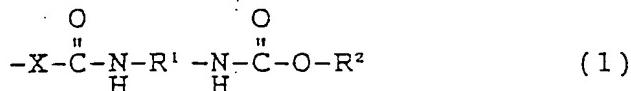
Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1-18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently Amended) A purified product of a polysaccharide containing a hydrophobic group having a content of at least 80% by weight of the polysaccharide containing the hydrophobic group, wherein the polysaccharide has a group represented by either -XH in which X is either an oxygen atom or a nitrogen-containing group represented by NY with Y being a hydrogen atom or a hydrocarbyl of 1-10 carbon atoms wherein 0.1-10 -XH groups per 100 monosaccharide units constituting the polysaccharide are replaced by one or more hydrophobic groups represented by the formula (1), namely,



in which X is the same as given above, R¹ denotes a hydrocarbyl having 1-50 carbon atoms and R² denotes a hydrocarbon group of 12-50 carbon atoms or a sterol group,

the content of an impurity product, in which both of the NCO groups in the diisocyanate are reacted with the hydroxyl group-containing hydrocarbon having 12-50 carbon atoms or with the sterol, being no greater than 0.05% by weight,

the polysaccharide containing the hydrophobic group being obtained by a process comprising

a first process step of producing an isocyanate group-containing hydrophobic compound, wherein one mole of a hydroxyl group-containing hydrocarbon having 12-50 carbon atoms or of a sterol is reacted with a diisocyanate

represented by OCN-R¹-NCO in which R¹ is a hydrocarbyl of 1-50 carbon atoms,

a second process step of producing the polysaccharide containing the hydrophobic group composed of the hydrocarbon group of 12-50 carbon atoms or of the steryl group, wherein the isocyanate group-containing hydrophobic compound obtained in the first process step is reacted with one or more polysaccharide, and

purifying the reaction product from the second process step using a solvent based on a ketone.

20. (Previously Presented) The purified product as claimed in claim 19, wherein the polysaccharide is selected from the group consisting of pullulan, amylopectin, amylose, dextran, hydroxyethyl cellulose, hydroxyethyl dextran, mannan, levan, inulin, chitin, chitosan, xyloglucan and water-soluble cellulose.

21. (Previously Presented) The purified product as claimed in claim 19, wherein R² in the formula (1) is steryl.

22. (Previously Presented) The purified product as claimed in claim 19, wherein the content of unsubstituted polysaccharide is no more than 20% by weight.

23. (Canceled)

24. (Previously Presented) The purified product of claim 19, wherein the product purified using the solvent based on a ketone is subjected to a further purification by dispersing the product in water under an ultrasonic treatment, with subsequent ultracentrifugal separation.

25. (Previously Presented) The purified product of claim 19, obtained by subjecting the product purified using the solvent based on a ketone to a further purification

procedure comprising dissolving the product in an aprotic polar solvent, admixing water with the resulting solution to cause unsubstituted polysaccharide to be transferred to an aqueous phase and removing the aqueous phase separated by phase separation.